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* 2112 Q.—SRI P. RANGASWAMI REDDIAR: Will the Hon. the Minister for Health be pleased to state whether the Government will be pleased to lay on the table of the House a copy of the Report of the Committee of three Medical Experts appointed by the Government to enquire into the case of a child Vasantha in Coimbatore, who was alleged to have lost her eyesight as a result of B.C.G. vaccination?

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY:—" Yes, Sir. A copy of the Report[a] is placed on the table of the House."

* 2113 Q.—SRI P. RANGASWAMI REDDIAR: Will the Hon. the Minister for Health be pleased to state—

(a) whether a girl by name Pushpavalli, daughter of Mr. Shanmugha Kandiar, a merchant of Glasskara Street, Manambuchavadi (Tanjore), had B.C.G. vaccination on 8th June 1955;

(b) whether soon after vaccination she got seriously ill on returning home and whether the Municipal Doctor treated her;

(c) whether the girl died next day; and

(d) whether the District Medical Officer visited the place and made enquiries; if so, his findings regarding the causes of her death?

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY:—" (a) The girl, Pushpavalli was not given any B.C.G. vaccination but had only the Tuberculin test on 8th June 1955.

" (b) It is understood that she developed fever in the course of the day and the Municipal doctor treated her.

" (c) Yes, Sir.

" (d) Yes, Sir. The District Medical Officer, Tanjore, visited the house along with one of the B.C.G. team Doctors the next morning after the girl had died, examined the body and made enquiries. The parents of the child mentioned that the child used to get ill frequently with glandular swelling in the groin. Taking into consideration all the circumstances of the case, the District Medical Officer considers that the girl suffered from an attack of filarial fever with adenitis and lymphangitis immediately preceding her death."

SRI S. PANCHAKSHARAM:—" It appears strange that almost all cases of complaints are peculiar to Coimbatore only. After the campaign was started by Sri C. Rajagopalachari, only one or two stray cases of complaint came from places like Tiruchirappalli. Have the Government tried to find out what is wrong with the B.C.G. vaccination in Coimbatore?"

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY:—" Most of the cases were from Coimbatore and reports about them came only after Rajaji started his anti-B.C.G. campaign . . ."

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[a] **Printed as Appendix II on pages 201–216 infra.**

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SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" Is this not an insinuation? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" I am only replying to a question. It is difficult to understand why most of these reports came from Coimbatore. Coimbatore people were very anxious. Even my Hon. Colleague the Finance Minister wanted the B.C.G. campaign to be started in other municipalities of his district particularly in Tiruppur. But the Government decided that the campaign should be begun first in the district headquarter towns and belt areas in every district, because the people of every district were anxious to have this vaccination."

SRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM :—" When was the decision to have a mass B.C.G. campaign in this State taken? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" B.C.G. vaccination was being carried on in Madras City from 1948, but it was confined to select groups. When Sri C. Rajagopalachari was the Chief Minister of this State, he said that it could first be started as a mass campaign in Tellicherry. But this decision to extend it to the whole State was taken some time after he ceased to be the Chief Minister, and the campaign began in November 1954 in Coimbatore."

DR. K. B. MENON :—" Is there any truth in the allegation that in this mass campaign there is forced vaccination, particularly among the little children in schools, and if there is any truth, will the Government stop it? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" The campaign is absolutely voluntary, and in the case of school children, they are asked to get the consent of their parents before they are vaccinated."

SRI V. R. KRISHNA AYYAR :—" Sri Rajaji has been maintaining that the B.C.G. campaign is wrong and the Government have been equally obstinately maintaining that it is the other way about. In this situation, will the Government be pleased to give legislative immunity to the doctors who are called upon to carry out this vaccination on account of the fact (a) that a public controversy over the B.C.G. campaign is still raging, and (b) that the consent for vaccination of persons who are *non compos mentis* is hardly of any use in law? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" There is no controversy worth the name. An international B.C.G. campaign has been carried on for years in about thirty countries. Among the States in India that are having the mass B.C.G. campaign, Madras is the last State to have the B.C.G. vaccination."

8-50 a.m. SRI V. BALAKRISHNAN :—" In the selected areas in Madras City in which this vaccination was tried, are there authentic records to show the number of successful cases as against the fatal cases to prove or disprove the wisdom or unwisdom of the present campaign? "

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THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" In Madras City there were no reports about any such complications. In Madanapalle this was tried for six months and tested. It is only after the results of successful experiment there were known that the Government of India thought of starting this mass campaign."

SRI S. DAIVASIGAMONEY :—" In view of certain reported cases of death of some children, may I know whether the Government have employed any machinery to watch the result and the reaction of this vaccination on persons who have been vaccinated with B.C.G. in rural areas and villages where there are no hospital facilities? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" Which cases of death among children the hon. Member is referring to I do not know except the one in Tanjore. No B.C.G. vaccine was given to this child and only tuberculin testing was done. Whenever any complications are reported, the Health Officers are immediately asked to inquire into the matter and, if necessary, to take them to the Government hospital for treatment."

SRI S. SWAYAMPRAKASAM :—" From all the replies given by the Hon. Minister, it is seen that the Government have no doubt in their mind that there is nothing wrong in this B.C.G. compaign. So far as this State is concerned, one solitary individual, namely Sri C. Rajagopalachari, is raising all sorts of doubts and fears. Because of his position in society, naturally people attach some importance to his views and confusion arises in some quarters. Because of his position, may I request the Government to take up the matter, hold high level talks with Sri Rajagopalachari instead of rushing to the Press and making public utterances, and convince him and thus avoid all sorts of misconceptions in the mind of the public? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" The hon. Member may make the attempt. I wish him all success. So far as this campaign is concerned, questions have been asked in the Andhra Legislative Assembly, in the Bengal Legislative Assembly and in the Central Legislative Assembly. In all those places it has been replied that Sri Rajagopalachari is a layman. We are advised by our specialists and we think that this vaccination measure is safe and useful."

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" In the brochure issued by Sri Rajagopalachari he has cited some cases where there were complications after B.C.G. vaccination. Have the Government taken care to examine such of those cases as have been listed by him in the pamphlet issued by him? Have the Government proved beyond reasonable doubt that those are not complications after B.C.G. vaccination and what steps have they taken to convince Sri Rajagopalachari about the desirability of continuing this mass vaccination? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" Sri Rajagopalachari has sent to me reports of a few cases. In all those cases we have

made inquiries and, if necessary, treatment has also been given in certain cases. In certain cases he has directly published in the papers without verification and investigation and we have requested the Press people not to publish such reports and create a scare in the public mind."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" The Hon. Minister said that in such cases the Government were guided by the advice of specialists. But from the report the opinion of the experts is unanimous that the time lag in experimenting with B.C.G. has been too short to pronounce any judgment on the reaction it makes on the people and we know that experts change their opinion because years ago their idea of tubercular infection was entirely different from what is obtainable to-day. To-day we are told that there is no harm in mingling tuberculosis patients with other patients. Therefore, inasmuch as sufficient time has not been taken for proper test and experiment in this respect, will the Government stop this quackery of mass B.C.G. vaccination without positive proof of its harmlessness?"

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" The World Health Organization Tuberculosis Committee could surely be said to be the highest authority in this matter. They have gone into this question. They have said that B.C.G. vaccination gives a high degree of protection and that in backward countries where the living conditions are poor, it is necessary to have mass B.C.G. vaccination. We cannot have a higher authority than this Committee. In this country the Medical Sub-Committee of the Planning Commission have also gone into this question and have advised that every State must take to mass B.C.G. vaccination."

SRI K. ARANGANATHAN :—" May I know whether, when Sri Rajagopalachari was the Chief Minister of this State, mass B.C.G. campaign was started in Tellicherry?"

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" Not started, Sir. He said that it could be started first in Tellicherry."

DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—" The fear of B.C.G. vaccination comes from the fact that there is a fear of this vaccine inducing tuberculosis in patients who have been given that. Will the Hon. Minister tell us whether it is not a fact that in the development of the bacille immunity resistance is the only factor present and infectivity is not present?"

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" Yes, Sir. The hon. Member himself has published an editorial in his journal 'Anti-septic' favouring B.C.G. vaccination."

DR. U. KRISHNA RAO :—" I should like to put it in simple language and that is this. The fear that B.C.G. vaccination might later on in life induce tuberculosis is without scientific foundation. Inoculation of B.C.G. increases the resistance of the

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patient and does not make him liable to infection. I was only putting a question in support of the Hon. Minister's campaign of B.C.G."

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" I thank the hon. Member. The answer ' Yes ' which I gave was correct."

SRI S. RAMALINGAM :—" Have the Government created any organisation to watch over the persons who are given B.C.G. vaccination whether they develop tuberculosis or power of resistance? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" It has been tested in many countries by various experts and the best laboratories of the world have experimented upon this and found that B.C.G. is harmless. The experience of many countries in the world also goes to show that B.C.G. is useful.

SRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM :—" The Hon. Minister has been conveniently evading the questions put by the hon. Members, Sri Ramalingam and Sri Daivasigamoney. The point is this. The Government have not provided adequate staff to follow up the vaccination and watch the reaction. That is why all this confusion and fear have arisen. Why should the Government take up such campaigns when they cannot provide adequate staff? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" There are no complications anywhere. The complications here and there are due to the scare raised in the public mind. Where any complications are reported, the Health Officers of the place are asked to inquire immediately into the matter and see what is necessary to be done."

SRI S. PANCHAKSHARAM :—" We are not at present concerned whether B.C.G. vaccination gives protection against tuberculosis or not. We are at present concerned whether this inoculation produces any adverse reaction in the bodies of people who have been inoculated. Has there been any large-scale protest by the people at large about such reaction? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" A little over 5 lakhs of people have been given B.C.G. vaccination and the reported cases are about a dozen or so, an infinitesimally small fraction. From this it will be evident that B.C.G. produces no harmful results. As I said and as I have been saying, the scare in the public mind is being created not merely by speeches and by statements in the Press but also by wide house-to-house canvassing and distribution of leaflets reprinted from a particular Tamil weekly and even posters are published. In this way a sort of mass hysteria has been created against B.C.G. "

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9 a.m. SRI V. R. KRISHNA AYYAR :—" Sir, the Hon. Minister was pleased to brand Sri Rajagopalachari as a layman and I certainly feel that the Hon. Minister is not on a higher status than he. The Hon. Minister has been all along saying that B.C.G. is not harmful, is not wrong and is not pernicious. Instead of saying like this, can the Hon. Minister show what staff or other organisation he has got and what material he has got to establish in this State that it is beneficial, it is salutary and it is useful as an immunity? There is no use in saying that it does not produce any adverse effects. Instead of resorting to pin-pricks and saying that it is not harmful and all that, can he tell us what is the good effect and what is the beneficial effect that it has produced? Can he give us some tangible data to show us that it is very useful as an immunity? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" Sir, it will take some time to know the results. I am sorry the hon. Member is not in a state of mind to receive or appreciate the information that I can supply to him. He says I am a layman. I never claimed to be an expert. I would like to quote Dr. B. C. Roy, for whom Sri Rajagopalachari has expressed high admiration in eulogistic terms. In the West Bengal Assembly, there was an interpellation and Dr. Mukerji, the Health Minister of West Bengal, told the questioner in the Assembly that the Government was not concerned with what Mr. C. Rajagopalachari . . ."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" Sir, on a point of order . . ."

DEPUTY SPEAKER :—" Let the Hon. Minister finish his answer. Then, the hon. Member may raise his point of order."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" Sir, I am raising my point of order to object to the Hon. Minister's reading from newspapers."

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" Sir, I am not reading. The hon. Member may have read the *Madras Mail* of August 17th and it is only two days old and it contains the answers given by Dr. Mukerji, Health Minister of West Bengal, and Dr. B. C. Roy, Chief Minister of West Bengal, during question time. When the hon. Member goes home, he can refer to this news item and read it for himself."

DEPUTY SPEAKER :—" Let us pass on to the next question."

(Several hon. Members stood in their seats.)

DEPUTY SPEAKER :—" I have already allowed 20 minutes for these questions on B.C.G. We will have to finish the other questions on the Agenda."

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" As this is a very important subject, I want that there must be a half-hour debate on it."

DEPUTY SPEAKER :—" What has the Hon. Leader of the House to say in the matter? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" We can see later and have the half-hour debate if there is time."

DEPUTY SPEAKER :—" I will consult the Hon. Leader of the House and let the House know the date on which we may have the half-hour debate."

SRI P. RAMAMURTHI :—" Sir, I would like to submit —whether the Government admit it or not—that there is a big controversy over this matter. We want the matter to be resolved once for all and to see that the best effects of this vaccination are available to the people. It is only from that point of view we want to know what are the measures taken by the Government so far in the matter. We are very anxious that the whole question should be thrashed out."

DEPUTY SPEAKER :—" I have only to repeat that I will consult the Hon. Leader of the House and announce the date when we will have the half-hour debate."

SRI V. R. KRISHNA AYYAR :—" On a point of order, Sir. The Hon. Minister was pleased to state that when Sri Rajagopalachari was the Chief Minister . . ."

DEPUTY SPEAKER :—" We have passed over that question. So, the hon. Member cannot refer to it."

SRI V. R. KRISHNA AYYAR :—" Sir, I am only raising a point of order. The Hon. Minister said that Sri Rajagopalachari, when he was Chief Minister said that B.C.G. campaign could be started at Tellicherry. The full facts will have to be placed before the House. When Sri Rajagopalachari was Chief Minister, I had opportunity to suggest to him the starting of B.C.G. campaign in Tellicherry. Then he told me that if it were his own son, he would not allow him to have B.C.G. vaccination. In all fairness, the Hon. Minister must give the full facts to the House. There is no good saying that Sri Rajagopalachari said that the campaign could be started in Tellicherry when in actual fact he was sceptical about the movement even when he was Chief Minister of this State."

DEPUTY SPEAKER :—" It is only a personal explanation and not a point of order."